

International Oncoplastic Fellowship in the UK

I am an international fellow in breast oncoplastic surgery through the International Surgical Training Program (ISTP) under the Royal College of Surgeons. Currently, I am working in St Helens and Knowsley Teaching Hospital NHS trust. I am a practicing general surgeon in Kenya, Africa, working in a local government hospital that is developing its oncologic service, hence my enrolment into the program

The program has provided opportunities for me to look at the breast service in a holistic way. Having come from a low income country, our breast care is not coordinated. I appreciate the one stop clinic with clients getting same day mammogram and biopsies, something which is almost unheard of back home. The timely turnaround time for results and most importantly the active participation of the patient in decision making is desirable. I am appreciating the active role of multidisciplinary teams in discussions of all patients and the commitment of all the team players and the up-to-date knowledge in all aspects of oncology spectrum.

I am particularly thrilled by the level of knowledge and exposure I am acquiring in oncoplastic surgery. I have learnt skin sparing and nipple sparing mastectomies and use of local flaps after breast conservation surgery. I was impressed with the nipple reconstruction in a patient after bilateral DIEP reconstruction. The meticulous precision into the procedure and the patient satisfaction was inspiring.

In the six months of my training so far, I have already picked up a lot to improve my surgical skills and overall management capabilities of a breast unit. I look forward to greater learning experiences from the team. I am very optimistic that the skills I will have acquired will be invaluable in the practice and training of surgical teams in my home country, as it will encourage people to present early when they realise that breast cancer can be treated without mutilation.

Bahaty Riogi

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